

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF  
**AGRICULTURE  
& COMMERCE**  
**2021 ANNUAL REPORT**



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**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE  
AND COMMERCE**

121 North Jefferson Street  
Jackson, MS 39201  
601-359-1100

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**BUREAU OF PLANT  
INDUSTRY**

705 Stone Blvd  
Mississippi State, MS 39762  
662-325-3390

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**MISSISSIPPI FARMERS  
MARKET**

929 High Street  
Jackson, MS 39202  
601-354-6573

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**MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE  
& FORESTRY MUSEUM**

1150 Lakeland Drive  
Jackson, MS 39216  
601-432-4500

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**MISSISSIPPI STATE  
FAIRGROUNDS**

1207 Mississippi Street  
Jackson, MS 39202  
601-961-4000

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**SOCIAL MEDIA**



@msdeptofag



@MSDeptofAg



Mississippi Department of  
Agriculture and Commerce

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**COVER PHOTO CREDIT:**

Jason Jones, Sr. (Photo taken in Jackson, MS)

# MISSISSIPPI AG FACTS PRODUCTION VALUE

**\$8.33 BILLION FOR 2021**

**AGRICULTURE TOPPED \$8 BILLION IN MISSISSIPPI  
IN 2021 FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER.**

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## FARMS

**34,700 IN MISSISSIPPI**

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## ACREAGE

**10.4 MILLION FARM ACRES IN  
MISSISSIPPI**

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## CATFISH

**35,100 WATER ACRES IN  
MISSISSIPPI**

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## FOREST

**19.7 MILLION FOREST ACRES IN  
MISSISSIPPI**

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## NATIONALLY

**MISSISSIPPI RANKS IN THE TOP 25  
IN PRODUCTION OF 10 COMMODITIES**

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## WORKFORCE

**17.4% OF THE STATE'S WORKFORCE  
IS EMPLOYED IN JOBS RELATED  
DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TO  
AGRICULTURE**

Source: Mississippi State University

# MISSISSIPPI TOP 10

Mississippi's top commodities, based on cash receipts



## 1. Broilers & Eggs

The value of poultry produced in Mississippi in 2021 was \$2.65 billion.



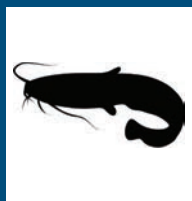
## 6. Cattle

The value of production of cattle in 2020 was \$398.9 million.



## 2. Soybeans

The value of soybeans produced in Mississippi in 2021 was \$1.49 billion.



## 7. Catfish

The value of catfish produced in Mississippi in 2020 was \$231.9 million.

Mississippi ranks #1 in the U.S. in farm-raised catfish production.



## 3. Forestry

The value of forestry products produced in Mississippi in 2021 was \$1.29 billion.



## 8. Hay

The value of production of hay in 2021 was \$160.1 million.



## 4. Corn

The value of corn production in 2021 was \$748.3 million.



## 9. Sweet Potatoes

The value of sweet potato production in 2021 was \$109.8 million.



## 5. Cotton

The value of production of cotton in 2021 was \$558.3 million.



## 10. Specialty Crops

The value of specialty crops produced in Mississippi in 2021 was \$108.5 million.

Source: Mississippi State University



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER ANDY GIPSON

It is with great pleasure that I present you with the Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021) of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC). As you read through this report, I hope you gain a better understanding of the diverse role that MDAC plays in promoting agriculture as well as protecting the largest industry in the state and each of you, the consumer. The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce touches the lives of all Mississippians, not just those directly involved in production agriculture.

I am proud of the Department's accomplishments this year. In addition to the agency's continued response to the pandemic, MDAC expanded many of our program areas and implemented new programs to assist consumers and the agriculture industry. I announced the first Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council, comprised of 12 high school seniors. As a result of the success of pop-up stores at the Mississippi State Fair and the Dixie National Rodeo, we opened the Genuine MS® Store inside of the Mississippi Farmers Market. The Wild Hog Control Program was implemented, which includes a trapping program to control this nuisance animal population. We announced the opening of a new international trade office on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to generate an increased interest in the state's agriculture and aquaculture commodities, particularly for exports.

The responsibilities of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce have broadened with the addition of the Mississippi State Fairgrounds to the agency. Numerous improvements have been made to the Fairgrounds, including the opening of the new Mississippi Trade Mart. The Mississippi State Fair and Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo continued to take place with safety precautions implemented, while introducing new events like the Mississippi Mudbug Festival.

At the Department, we will continue to strive for excellence in the support and promotion of Mississippi agriculture. You can learn more about your Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce by visiting our website at [www.mdac.ms.gov](http://www.mdac.ms.gov).

Sincerely,



Andy Gipson, Commissioner



In addition to overseeing the responsibilities of the Department, duties of the Commissioner of Agriculture include leadership through service on the following boards:

- Mississippi Board of Animal Health
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Permit Board
- Mississippi Land, Water, and Timber Resources Board
- Mississippi Egg Marketing Board
- Southern U.S. Trade Association, President
- State Seed Board
- State Soil & Water Conservation Committee

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## MDAC FY 2021 ANNUAL REPORT (JULY 1, 2020- JUNE 30, 2021)

The responsibilities of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) are multifaceted. The mission of MDAC is to promote and regulate agricultural-related businesses within the state, to ensure commerce operates in a fair and open market, and to promote Mississippi's products throughout the state and the rest of the world for the benefit of all Mississippi citizens.

### MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The Market Development Division is responsible for promoting Mississippi's agricultural products and agricultural-related businesses statewide and worldwide through programs such as the Certified Farmers Market Program, Agritourism Registration Program, Farm-to-School Program, and the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*. The Mississippi Farmers Market provides farmers, specialty food processors, and artisans with a convenient, affordable location to sell their locally grown and produced items directly to the consumer.

- The Division received \$434,543.90 in Specialty Crop Block Grant funds from USDA to promote the specialty crop industry in the state. Since its inception in 2006, MDAC has received \$4,653,303.24 from USDA in Specialty Crop Block Grant funds.
- Due to the success of the Genuine MS® Pop-Up Stores at the Mississippi State Fair and the Dixie National Rodeo, a permanent Genuine MS® Store was opened in the Mississippi Farmers Market where shoppers can find a variety of products made in Mississippi.
- The *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, a semi-monthly publication published on the 1st and 15th of each month, increased its circulation to over 35,000 in-state and out-of-state subscribers.

### MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURAL & LIVESTOCK THEFT BUREAU

The Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB) enforces laws to prevent agriculture-related thefts. The Bureau investigates theft involving agribusiness, including timber theft, equipment theft, chemical theft, and livestock theft. MALTB also handles the registration of all livestock brands in the state.

- The Bureau investigated 255 cases with a reported value of over \$1,919,748.
- MALTB recovered \$670,310 in stolen property.

### MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY MUSEUM

The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, the educational arm of the Department, creates an environment that communicates the value of past and present Mississippi agricultural lifestyles, relationships, and practices and their relevance to people's everyday lives. The Museum tells the story of Mississippi's agricultural history through indoor and outdoor exhibits and events.

- The Museum held its successful annual events including Science Fest, October Pumpkin Adventure, Harvest Fest, Homestead for the Holidays, Easter Egg Hunt, and Mississippi Pickle Fest.
- The Museum was selected as the recipient of USDA's NRCS grant to construct two high tunnels to educate the public.
- Ground was broken on the new Magnolia Gardens project.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

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## MISSISSIPPI STATE FAIRGROUNDS

The Mississippi State Fairgrounds creates an environment that exemplifies the entertainment industry, livestock lifestyle, and small businesses of Mississippi. The Fairground's purpose is to promote Mississippi agriculture and industry. It provides a venue for a number of livestock and horse shows, concerts, exhibitions, trade shows, and various competitions.

- The Mississippi State Fairgrounds merged with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce in July 2020.
- The newly constructed Mississippi Trade Mart was completed in October 2020.
- A \$2.3 million renovation was completed in the Coliseum which included repairing and painting the floors and walls, installing 6,500 new seats with cupholders, and adding handrails and reflectors.
- The Mississippi State Fairgrounds hosted the 161st annual Mississippi State Fair in October 2020 with 360,000 in attendance.
- The Fairgrounds hosted the 56th annual Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo in February 2021 with 20,000 attending the rodeo.
- The Fairgrounds hosted the inaugural Mississippi Mudbug Festival in April 2021 with 60,000 in attendance.

## BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) protects the agricultural and horticultural interests of Mississippi from harmful insects, diseases, and weeds. The Bureau is also responsible for registering pesticides, feeds, seeds, fertilizers, and soil amendments sold in the state, as well as, permitting all pest control operators throughout the state.

- BPI administers approximately 31 programs, which includes Pesticide and Environmental Programs; Structural Pest Control Programs; Incidents and Complaints; Feed, Seed, Fertilizer, Lime, Soil, and Plant Amendment Regulatory; and Testing, Horticulture, Apiary, and Plant Pest Quarantine.
- BPI registered 44,541 feed, fertilizer, lime, and pesticide products; registered 2,022 feed, fertilizer, lime manufacturers, and distributors; collected 8,017 pesticide, seed, feed, fertilizer, and lime samples; certified 944 nurseries and nursery dealers; and conducted 1,199 nursery and dealer inspections.
- BPI issued 177 pest management consultants licenses, 1,697 private applicator certificates, and 510 commercial applicator certificates.

## BUREAU OF REGULATORY SERVICES

The Bureau of Regulatory Services is responsible for the various regulatory functions of the Department, which extend from on-farm production to processing and retail markets. Regulatory Service inspectors conduct sanitation inspections of grocery stores and meat plants to ensure the adherence to food safety regulations. They are also responsible for the certification of gas pumps and verification of weights and measures.

- Weights & Measures Division tested 4,612 devices/scales.
- Consumer Protection Division issued 1,947 retail food establishment licenses and conducted 3,228 retail food sanitation inspections.
- Meat Inspection Division inspected nearly 80 million pounds of red meat and poultry products.
- Petroleum Products Inspection Division inspected 56,314 registered devices and obtained 1,919 fuel samples at 2,663 retail establishments.
- The Grains and Warehouses Division licensed 41 grain dealers and 14 grain warehouses.
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

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## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT DIVISION

The Information Management Division (IMD) provides information technology and services to all employees of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, as well as provides technical and network support, application development and systems support, and strategic planning services for both MDAC and the Mississippi Board of Animal Health.

- Provided general IT support, resolving 1,345 tracked agency Help Desk tickets.
- Switched MDAC mobile app platforms and updated mobile apps including apps for the MS State Fair and Dixie National Rodeo allowing for near instant response to publication, updates, and communications.
- Developed AgNet portals and portals for various program areas in the Department increase efficiency and to provide more direct access to information for consumers.
- Maintained a digital media presence including MDAC website, Ag Museum, Fairgrounds, Dixie National Rodeo, Bureau of Animal Health, Genuine MS®, and Marketplace Portal.

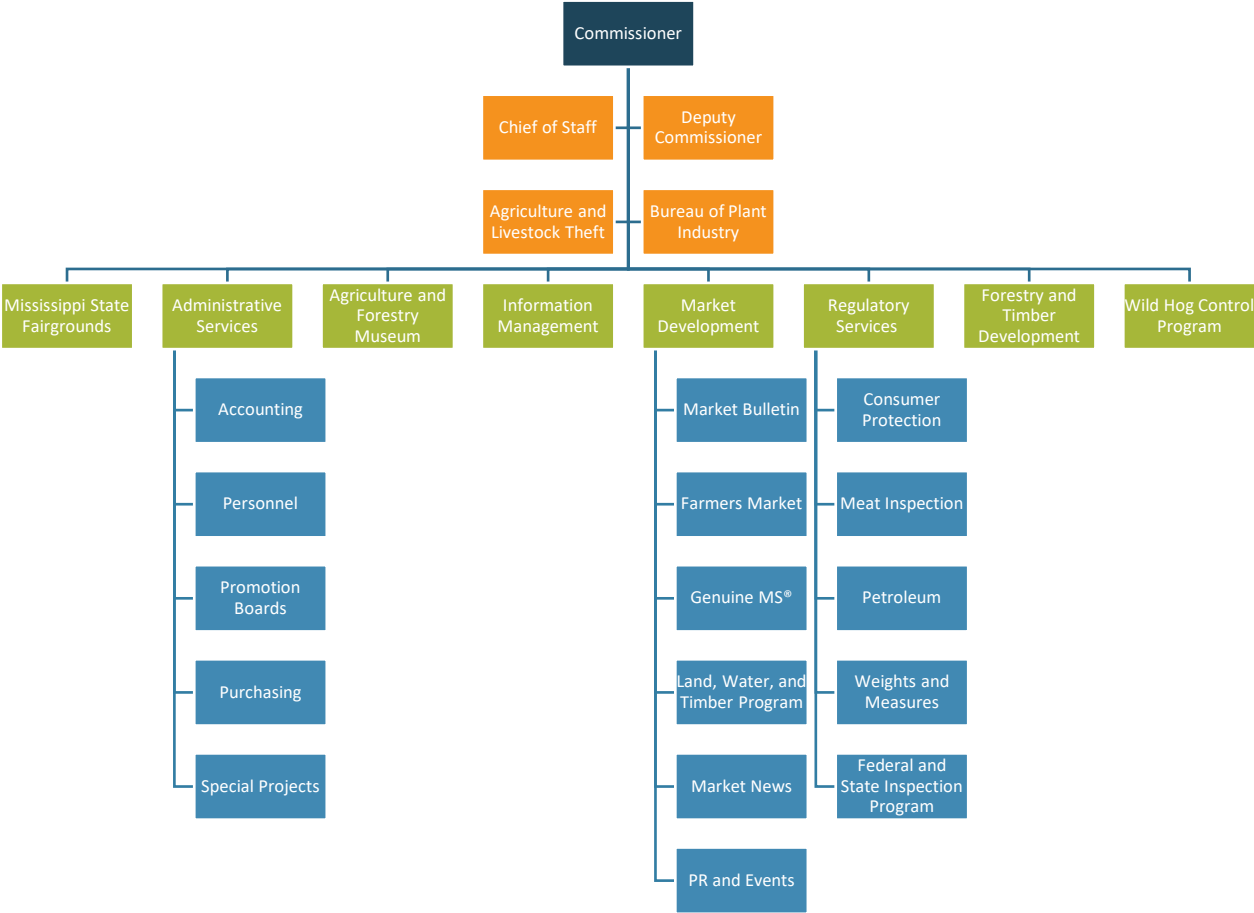
## OTHER MDAC PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The Timber Commerce Division developed a plan to utilize various industry data to provide an overview of the timber industry. Industry data related to transportation, exports, manufacturing, mill capacity, and green tons in forests are being gathered and put into in user-friendly formats that can be used by the industry.
- The Ag Workforce Development Program partnered with employment service agencies to promote job opportunities in agriculture or related businesses and industry through workshops, hosted a job fair for the Mississippi State Fairgrounds, created a collaboration with the Mississippi Veterans Workforce Program “Work for Warriors”, and formed the Mississippi Agriculture Safety and Mental Health Coalition.
- Fifteen farmers markets and one farm stand participated in the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), and 27 farmers markets participated in the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program with an estimated 150 farmers authorized to participate in the programs and nearly 10,000 low-income Mississippi residents receiving FMNP vouchers.
- The Wild Hog Control Program began in fiscal year 2021 as a result of legislation passed during the 2020 regular Session. Twenty-two traps were deployed across the state. Three application periods were opened to the public for submission of trap applications, and twenty-two traps were deployed across the state with 688 wild hogs being on 30 properties in 18 counties.

# MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE



The responsibilities of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) are multifaceted. The mission of MDAC is to promote and regulate agricultural-related businesses within the state, to ensure commerce operates in a fair and open market, and to promote Mississippi's products throughout the state and the rest of the world for the benefit of all Mississippi citizens.



## ADMINISTRATION

**Andy Gipson - Commissioner**  
**Brian Perry - Chief of Staff**  
**Ricky Luke - Deputy Commissioner**



# MDAC COVID-19 RESPONSE

During the fiscal year 2021, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce continued with efforts to assist with issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

MDAC distributed food boxes consisting of produce, meat, and dairy items to the public at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds during the summer and fall of 2020. During the four distribution times, MDAC distributed a total of 7,044 food boxes, 11,490 dozen eggs, and 7,372 gallons of milk. This was part of the United States Department of Agriculture's Farmers to Families Food Box Program.

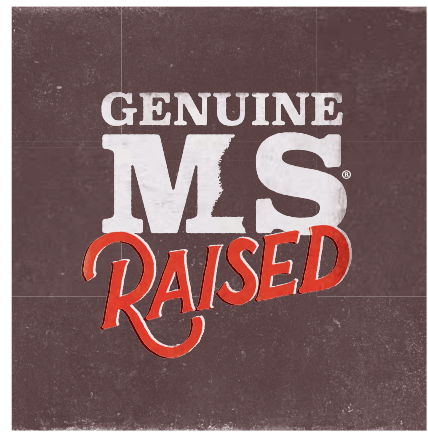
MDAC implemented the Mississippi Agriculture Stabilization Act (MASA). This Act went into law on October 9, 2020, through Senate Bills 3058 and 3061, and provided funds to assist producers who incurred additional operating expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Mississippi with CARES Act funds. MASA had three separate funds within it: Poultry Farmer Stabilization Grant Fund; Sweet Potato Farm Sustainment Grant Program Fund; and Mississippi Supplemental CFAP Grant Program Fund. Through MASA, \$7,697,012 was distributed by MDAC directly to farmers as a reimbursement for expenses incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Mississippi Land, Water and Timber Resources Board announced the approval of more than \$4.03 million in financial assistance to nine livestock processing facilities to increase their capacity following interruptions in the food supply chain due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds were approved to expand currently operating USDA-inspected processing facilities and construct new USDA-inspected facilities. The number of USDA-inspected facilities that provide slaughtering and processing services to the public will double. A new mobile processing unit, the first of its kind in Mississippi, will bring the slaughtering component direct to the farm.

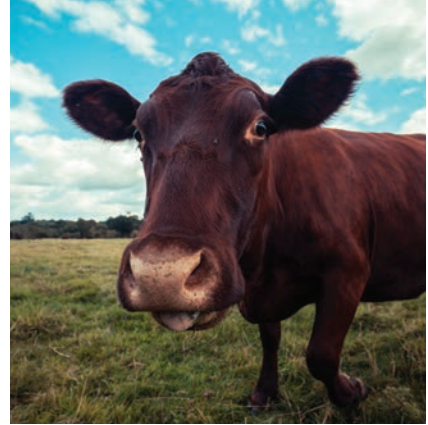
The 2020 Mississippi State Fair and the 2021 Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo went ahead as planned. The Fairgrounds implemented proper sanitation and safety protocols including locating hand sanitizer stations throughout the grounds, making masks available to guests, and sanitizing fair rides.



***MDAC staff and volunteers distributing food boxes to the public at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds during the summer and fall of 2020.***



GENUINE  
**MS**



## MARKET DEVELOPMENT

### WORKING FOR YOU

*The Market Development Division promotes Mississippi agriculture and the state's agricultural products across the state, nation, and world.*

The Market Development Division is dedicated to promoting Mississippi's agriculture commodities and the farmers and ranchers who produce them. This is accomplished through participation in trade shows, conferences and fairs, international trade, presentations to schools and civic organizations, promotion of local farmers markets, connecting with other agricultural organizations and commodity groups, and various other communication outlets. The Market Development Division consists of three main program areas: communications/outreach, promotional programs, and grants and cost-share programs.



## COMMUNICATIONS / OUTREACH

The Market Development Division serves as the communications and outreach arm of the Department and is responsible for media and public relations.

The Market Development Division publishes the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, a buy/sell newspaper for farmers to advertise their agricultural items that have been raised, grown, produced, or operated on their farms. The *Mississippi Market Bulletin* is a semi-monthly publication, published on the 1st and 15th of each month, with a circulation over 35,000 in-state and out-of-state subscribers.

The Division partners with Farm Flavor Media to publish and distribute *Mississippi Agriculture*, an annual magazine that tells the stories of Mississippi's agriculture industry to educate the public on the importance of the state's largest industry.



## PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMS

The primary focus of the Market Development Division is the promotion of Mississippi agricultural products statewide, nationwide, and worldwide, in order to increase the purchase and consumption of products that are grown, raised, crafted, and made in the state. MDAC administers several programs that promote these agricultural products.

### **Mississippi Farm Marketplace**

The Mississippi Farm Marketplace is an online market portal that gives farmers a place to list commodities they have for sale, while providing consumers a location to easily source local products. The portal can be accessed at [MSFarmMarketplace.com](http://MSFarmMarketplace.com), where commodities such as produce, meats, dairy products, honey, live animals for custom slaughter, eggs, aquaculture, seafood, and horticulture products can be located. The portal also contains a listing of available on-farm jobs.

### **Agritourism Limited Liability Registration Program**

MDAC's Agritourism Limited Liability Registration Program provides limited liability and promotion to farms engaged in agritourism activities. There are 90 registered agritourism operations in the state.



## **Farm-to-School**

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce partners with the Mississippi Department of Education to promote the purchase of Mississippi-grown fruits and vegetables for the Department of Defense (DoD) Farm-to-School Program. During the 2020-2021 school year, \$372,420.00 of Mississippi produce items were purchased by schools across the state. MDAC has partnered with the Bower Foundation to reimburse farmers for the freezing and storage costs of fresh-frozen produce purchased through the program. For every \$1 that the Bower Foundation invested in the program, \$39 of Mississippi grown fresh-frozen fruits and vegetables were purchased and served to students across Mississippi. Farmers participating in the Farm-to-School Program utilized the Revolving Fund Program to receive their produce payments within five days of delivery.

## **Livestock and Grain Market News**

The Livestock and Grain Market News Program is a federal/state cooperative agreement in conjunction with USDA. Fourteen livestock auction markets are reported by eight cross-trained Mississippi Board of Animal Health personnel. Prices collected from the fourteen sales represent 85 percent of all the livestock markets throughout the state. Livestock and grain pricing is collected and disseminated throughout the internet and radio five days a week. These prices are used by lending institutions, university agricultural economists, consultants, and livestock associations.

## **International Trade**

MDAC works to create marketing opportunities for Mississippi's farmers and agribusinesses through international trade. MDAC is a member of the Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA). SUSTA encompasses 14 Southern states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Its mission is to increase exports for U.S. agriculture products and high-value foods. MDAC works jointly with other state and federal agencies to collaborate and deliver accurate information for companies interested in exporting through site visits, research, and providing potential opportunities, such as SUSTA. Market Development staff serve as liaisons for SUSTA to promote opportunities available for Mississippi agriculture and value-added products, in addition to serving as activity managers for trade shows and missions. Trade shows give small companies the opportunity to have a larger presence by being branded under the SUSTA name and pavilion.

Through MDAC's membership in SUSTA, Mississippi companies can take advantage of cost-share programs, allowing them to be reimbursed for eligible expenses incurred to reach new international markets.

# MARKET DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

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## Certified Farmers Market Program

MDAC administers the Certified Farmers Market Program to promote farmers markets in the state with Mississippi farmers selling Mississippi produce and other agricultural products. MDAC certified 21 markets in 2021.



**GENUINE MS®**

Genuine MS® identifies and promotes products proudly created or produced by Mississippi farmers, artisans, entrepreneurs, and manufacturers. The purpose of the Genuine MS® program is to increase public awareness of Mississippi's farm, food, crafted, and fabricated products by branding them as Genuine MS®.

The website, [GenuineMS.com](http://GenuineMS.com), serves as a centralized location featuring members' products, while connecting consumers across the globe with the people and places that grow, raise, craft, and make Genuine MS® products. The program allows member companies to share their unique stories in an effort to increase consumer awareness of their products. Genuine MS® shows state pride and keeps the economy strong.

There are four classifications of membership determined by members' products in the Genuine MS® program — Grown, Raised, Crafted, and Made. The Genuine MS® Grown classification consists of farmers who grow everything from produce, nuts, and row crops to horticulture and timber in Mississippi. The Genuine MS® Raised classification consists of farmers, ranchers, and aquaculturists with animals and aquaculture products raised in Mississippi or those selling products from animals and aquaculture products raised in Mississippi. The Genuine MS® Crafted classification consists of craftspeople whose products are hand-created in Mississippi from agricultural products, which includes specialty foods and beverages and pet and artisan products. The Genuine MS® Made classification consists of manufacturers whose products are 51 percent or more manufactured in Mississippi to benefit agriculture.



***Genuine MS has four unique logos. With these, producers can label their products under the Grown, Raised, Crafted, or Made categories.***

The Market Development Division opened the Genuine MS® Pop-Up Store at the Mississippi State Fair in October 2020 to create a retail marketing opportunity for the program's members. A Genuine MS® Pop-Up Store was also opened at the Mississippi Farmers Market during the holidays and again at the 2021 Dixie National Rodeo. Due to the success of the pop-up stores, a permanent Genuine MS® Store was opened in the Mississippi Farmers Market in April 2021. Shoppers can find unique items such as specialty foods, leather goods, jewelry, and decor and gift items. Pop-up stores continue to be utilized at the Mississippi State Fair and the Dixie National Rodeo.



## GRANTS AND COST-SHARE PROGRAMS

The Market Development Division offers grant and cost-share programs to assist farmers and agribusinesses. Funding for these programs is made available through USDA rather than state funds.

### **Specialty Crop Block Grant**

Through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Program, MDAC awarded \$434,543.90 to organizations to enhance the state's specialty crop industry. Twelve projects were awarded to universities and producer organizations to administer promotional efforts, educational workshops, and research projects in areas specifically related to sweet potatoes, tomatoes, horticulture, strawberries, tea and various other fruit and vegetable crops. Thirty-eight projects are currently ongoing through this program.

### **GAP/GHP Cost-Share Program**

MDAC administers the Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) Cost-Share Program to reimburse farmers for 75 percent of the cost (up to \$750) incurred to obtain the GAP/GHP food safety certification. Twenty-four reimbursements were granted. This program is funded by the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

### **Organic Cost-Share Program**

MDAC offers the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program to reimburse for 50% (up to \$500) incurred to obtain the certification. This program is funded through the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

### **Growing Lunch School Garden Grant**

MDAC continued the Growing Lunch School Garden Grant through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Program for schools interested in building a school garden. Eight schools participated during fiscal year 2021. MDAC has awarded 78 grants since 2014.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Received \$434,543.90 in Specialty Crop Block Grant funds from USDA to promote the specialty crop industry of the state.
- Since its inception in 2006, MDAC has received \$4,653,303.24 from USDA in Specialty Crop Block Grant funds.
- Provided 67 Certificates of Free Sales to 19 companies exporting Mississippi agricultural products.
- Partnered with local grocery stores to label and promote local products as Genuine MS® goods.
- Opened the Genuine MS® Store inside the Mississippi Farmers Market.



***Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson officially cut the ribbon to the new Genuine MS® Store at the Farmers Market on Saturday, April 10, 2021. The store is located inside of the Mississippi Farmers Market at 929 High Street. The Genuine MS® Store is a permanent fixture of the Farmers Market, in addition to its pop-up stores featured at numerous events at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds.***

**DIRECTOR**  
**PAIGE MANNING**  
Paige@mdac.ms.gov

# MISSISSIPPI FARMERS MARKET

*The Mississippi Farmers Market provides a location for Mississippi farmers to sell their locally-grown and produced agricultural products direct to the public.*

The Mississippi Farmers Market was created by the Mississippi Legislature to provide a facility for the efficient handling of farm products in the interest of the farmer, consumer, general public, and the State of Mississippi. The 18,000-square foot facility serves as a central location for farmers, specialty food makers, and local artisans to sell their agricultural goods and wares. The Market provides farmers with additional marketing opportunities, while increasing consumers' access to fruits, vegetables, and other farm-raised products. The Market remained open during the pandemic and put safety measures in place, such as repositioning vendors to face outward for an open-air, safer shopping experience for customers.

The Mississippi Farmers Market participates in two USDA Farmers Market Nutrition Programs: the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. These programs provide vouchers to eligible WIC participants and senior citizens to shop at the Market.

The Market also rents the facility for private events, and a restaurant that utilizes products from Market vendors is located inside the Market. It serves breakfast and lunch five days per week.

## ACCOMPLISHMENT

- Provided a venue for 80 vendors with an average of 36 vendors attending per week.



**MANAGER**  
**PATRICK DUCKWORTH**  
FarmersMarket@mdac.ms.gov

# COUNTY CORRESPONDENTS PROGRAM



## MDAC County Correspondents Program

The County Correspondents Program ensures the flow of information on current issues to and from the agency and local farmers in each county in a timely manner. The program designates farmers from every Mississippi county to serve as County Correspondents. Each correspondent communicates with MDAC on issues affecting their local jurisdiction.

An MDAC staff member is assigned to each of the five county correspondent regions. The assigned staff member works closely with the County Correspondents within their region.

***The program is divided into five regions. Each region has one MDAC staff member that provides status updates to the central office in Jackson.***

### DIRECTOR

CLAUDE NASH

Claude@mdac.ms.gov



# TIMBER COMMERCE

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*The Timber Commerce Division actively engages with State agencies and the private sector to promote the timber industry.*

The Timber Commerce Division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce promotes timber products domestically and internationally.

The Timber Commerce Division worked with experts on infrastructure, supply chain, and transportation solutions to benefit the timber industry and all agriculture commodities. The Timber Division assisted producers, mills, and operators during the shutdown and fielded many calls regarding the steep rise of retail lumber prices.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Developed a plan to utilize various industry data to provide an overview of the timber industry. Industry data related to transportation, exports, manufacturing, mill capacity, and green tons in forests are being gathered and put into in user-friendly formats that can used used by the industry.



### DIRECTOR

GINGER WILLIAMSON

Ginger@mdac.ms.gov



# AGRICULTURE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Agriculture Workforce Development is dedicated to growing Mississippi agriculture through workforce education, outreach, and development. The program strives to help the agriculture industry and businesses meet employment demands of Mississippi's agriculture workforce and to create a pipeline of quality educational and training opportunities for high school and college students pursuing a career in agriculture. This program partners with Mississippi agricultural businesses, industries, educational institutions, and agricultural youth development organizations to promote awareness and increase the number of qualified applicants for agricultural jobs.



***FFA members served as volunteers during the Mississippi State Fair Ag Expo.***

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Partnered with multiple employment service agencies to promote job opportunities in agriculture or related businesses and industry through workshops.
- Hosted a job fair for the Mississippi State Fairgrounds in May 2021.
- Created a collaboration with the Mississippi Veterans Workforce Program “Work for Warriors” to connect job opportunities and potential employee pools with soldiers who are coming off active duty. This collaboration opened communication between employers who were looking for qualified, skilled, and willing workers and targeted those opportunities to specific clientele. We were able to connect applicants to jobs in the trucking industry and to new lumber mills that are locating in the state.
- Formed the Mississippi Agriculture Safety and Mental Health Coalition to create an awareness of services available to farmers and farm families regarding stress management, farm safety and the importance of mental health. Applied for and received a \$500 USDA-NIFA grant to promote Agriculture Mental Health Awareness through a partnership with Mississippi State University Extension Service and the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation.
- Launched the first cohort of the Mississippi Agriculture Youth Council, comprised of 12 high school seniors from across the state. An application period was opened, interviews conducted, council members selected.

**DIRECTOR**  
**GAYLE FORTENBERRY**  
Gayle@mdac.ms.gov

# FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAMS

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The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce coordinates two USDA-funded supplemental nutrition programs that benefit fruit and vegetable growers and eligible Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) program participants and low-income senior citizens in select communities of Mississippi. The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program provide vouchers for nutritionally at-risk Mississippi residents to redeem at authorized farmers markets in the state.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Fifteen farmers markets and one farm stand participated in the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and 27 farmers markets participated in the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.
- An estimated 150 farmers were authorized to participate in the programs.
- Nearly 10,000 low-income Mississippi residents received FMNP (WIC and Senior) vouchers to redeem at participating farmers markets.
- Participants in both programs redeemed over \$117,000 in FMNP benefits with participating fruit and vegetable growers in Mississippi.



*Promoting the program at the Hattiesburg Farmers Market and at the Benton County Farmers Market.*

### DIRECTOR

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# WILD HOG CONTROL PROGRAM

Through the Wild Hog Control Program (WHCP), the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce offers wild hog traps to land managers for the control of wild hogs on private agricultural and forestry lands in Mississippi. Wild hogs cause more than \$60 million in property damage in the state each year, with substantial damage to row crops, pastures, and forestlands. The Wild Hog Control Program uses traps to control this problem. Traps are deployed in concentrated focal areas across the state. Focal areas are determined by MDAC through an application process. MDAC provides the training necessary to use the “smart” traps and technical guidance regarding the most effective methods to trap and control wild hogs on private lands.

Submitted applications are evaluated based on the number of acres available for trapping, historical agricultural losses caused by wild hogs on the property, and current trapping efforts on the property. A cooperative application is encouraged for small acreage (i.e., adjoining land managers of small parcels should work together to submit one application). Traps are available for one-month intervals, dependent upon use and success. One trap per 1,000 acres is recommended, depending on landscape and land use.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Wild Hog Control Program began in fiscal year 2021 as a result of legislation passed during the 2020 regular Session.
- One Nuisance Wildlife Specialist was hired to coordinate trapping activities in the field.
- Twenty-two traps were deployed across the state.
- An online database was created to receive and manage applications submitted by the public.
- Three application periods were opened to the public for submission of trap applications.
- Six hundred eighty-eight (688) wild hogs were captured on 30 properties in 18 counties.
- Technical guidance regarding the trapping of wild hogs was provided to 143 people.

**DIRECTOR**  
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# AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK THEFT BUREAU

*The Mississippi Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau assists in the investigation of all farm and agriculture-related crimes.*

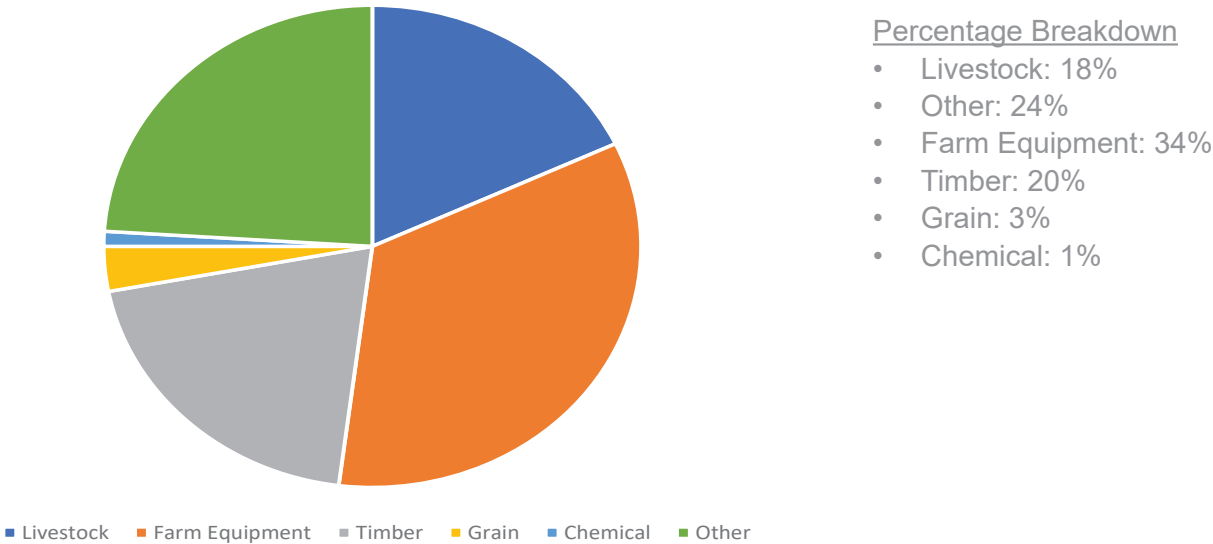
The Mississippi Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau (MALTB) enforces all state laws pertaining to the theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment, chemicals, timber, and other farm or agriculture-related crimes. The Bureau consists of nine investigators, one for each Mississippi Highway Patrol District. The Bureau is also responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all persons who violate any of the laws administered by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

In addition to its law enforcement function, MALTB maintains registration of all livestock brands. Branding is not required for livestock in Mississippi. However, if livestock are branded, the brand must be registered. The brands are recorded for a five-year period at a cost of five dollars. Registered brands are published in book form and distributed to law enforcement members throughout the state.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Bureau investigated 255 cases with a reported value of over \$1,319,748 clearing 118 cases.
- Recovered property was valued at \$670,310.
- The Bureau issued approximately 1,565 brands, which generated approximately \$7,825 for a five year period.
- The total recovery rate during the fiscal year was 51 percent.

Percentage Distribution of Dollar Value of Reported Crimes





# AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK

## THEFT BUREAU CONTINUED



***Pictured are some items recovered by the MALTb.***

***From top left: The Quarter horse, valued at \$2,000 was stolen from Smith County and recovered in Smith County. The John Deere Tractor valued at \$47,000 and mower, valued at \$27,000, were stolen from MS AG in Gluckstadt and recovered in Moorhead, Miss. The Mahindra Tractor, box blade, and trailer with a total value of \$25,000 was stolen from Grenada, Miss. and recovered in Morton, Miss. A Can-am side by side, valued at \$75,000 was stolen from Jackson, Miss. and recovered in Madison County.***

**DIRECTOR**  
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# MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY MUSEUM CULTIVATING MISSISSIPPI

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***The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum tells the story of Mississippi's agricultural history through indoor and outdoor exhibits and events.***

The mission of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum is to create an environment that communicates the value of past and present Mississippi agricultural lifestyles, relationships, and practices and their relevance to the future of all people. The Museum consists of multiple exhibits including Small Town Mississippi, a train exhibit featuring several gauges of trains, and a nature trail. The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum is home to the Bisland Cotton Gin, America's oldest working cotton gin, and the National Agriculture Aviation Museum.

# MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY MUSEUM CONTINUED

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## ANNUAL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, in cooperation with the LeFleur Museum District, hosted the fourth annual Mississippi Science Fest with over 300 students and adults attending the two-day festival in person, while 9,000 participated virtually. Presenters included groups from MS State University Engineering Departments, 4-H, MSU Extension, agriculture association, and STEM-based private businesses.
- Over 3,800 children and adults attended the October Pumpkin Adventure, down from 6,400 from the previous year due to COVID-19. This event included a hayride tour of gardens and Small Town Mississippi, a walk around the Museum, and a pumpkin to take home.
- Harvest Festival was visited by nearly 1,500 people, down from 5,700 the previous year due to COVID-19. This educational event consisted of demonstrations at the sawmill, cane mill, print shop, blacksmith shop, and grist mill. The Bisland Cotton Gin, America's oldest working cotton gin, ginned multiple bales of cotton for visitors. The event also featured hit-and-miss engines, bluegrass music, antique tractors, and live interpreters demonstrating butter churning at the Fortenberry-Parkman Farmstead.
- The Museum hosted more than 1,500 guests for its Homestead for the Holidays event. This event was sponsored by the Mississippi Egg Marketing Board and the Mississippi Beef Council. Guests were treated to wagon and train rides, Small Town in Lights, story time with Santa, live music, and breakfast for dinner.
- Spring Farm Days offered the opportunity for more than 984 visitors to see tractor demonstrations, blacksmith demonstrations, and tour the Fortenberry-Parkman Farmstead over a 3-day period.
- The Mississippi Egg Marketing Board's Annual Easter Egg Hunt was a huge success after having to cancel the year before, with 1,521 hopping down the rabbit trail that meandered throughout the entire Museum grounds while collecting Easter eggs.
- The 2nd annual Mississippi Pickle Fest was attended by 3,037 guests. The reigning champ crowned the new winner of the pickle eating contest and pickle jar packing contest. Over 35 vendors were available, along with food trucks, water slides, and games throughout the grounds.



## NEW PROGRAMMING

- The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum was selected as the recipient of USDA's NRCS grant to construct two high tunnels. The Museum is using this opportunity to create a new educational space for horticulture through the planting, tending, and harvesting of fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Students of all ages participated in this new outdoor classroom.

# MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY MUSEUM CONTINUED

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## NEW PROJECTS

- Completed a revenue-generating project that included building an attached, enclosed structure to house a walk-in cooler/freezer and a covered structure to house a new meat smoker, allowing the Museum to offer daily smoked meats and holiday treats, including casseroles, and a new line of jarred goods through the General Store.
- Completed the renovations for the Forestry Exhibit with financial help from Mississippi Forestry Association.
- High Tunnel was built and planting commenced, allowing students and guests the opportunity to see and experience horticulture and how to grow a victory garden.
- The Ethnic building, a rental venue, received damages from a busted sprinkler pipe during the February 2021 ice storm. Major repairs and renovations will take place.
- New lighting and A/V will be put in rental venues including Sparkman, Forestry, and Education buildings.
- Renovations are underway for a new Dairy Exhibit and new Oil Derrick display.
- Broke ground on the new Magnolia Gardens exhibit at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum. This initiative honors and memorializes loved ones with a living legacy. It includes a premier garden, lighted pathways, water features, and a Magnolia tree lined boulevard.

## DIRECTOR

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# MISSISSIPPI STATE FAIRGROUNDS

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The Mississippi State Fairgrounds merged with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce in July 2020. The Mississippi Fairgrounds Complex covers over 100 acres with a mile-long midway. The Fairgrounds consists of the Mississippi Coliseum, the new Mississippi Trade Mart, Kirk Fordice Equine Center, 14 livestock barns, and space to park more than 6,000 vehicles.

The Mississippi State Fairgrounds creates an environment that exemplifies the entertainment industry, livestock lifestyle, and small businesses of Mississippi. The Fairgrounds provides a venue for a number of livestock and horse shows, concerts, exhibitions, trade shows, and various competitions. Two popular annual events held at the Fairgrounds annually are the Junior League of Jackson's Mistletoe Marketplace and Comic-Con. While many events were cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, events are once again in full swing. Even in the midst of the pandemic, the Mississippi State Fairgrounds was visited by over 500,000 visitors in fiscal year 2021.

Promoting agriculture is at the center of the Mississippi State Fairgrounds. Agriculture is promoted heavily at the two largest events hosted by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi State Fairgrounds – the Mississippi State Fair and the Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo. Each of these events brings tens of thousands of visitors to the Fairgrounds and the capitol city contributing millions of dollars to the local economy. The Dixie National Rodeo is the largest rodeo east of the Mississippi River and brings in participants from other countries.

This year, the Mississippi State Fairgrounds hosted a new five-day outdoor event, the Mississippi Mudbug Festival, in April 2021. This event will become an annual event.





## ANNUAL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

### Mississippi State Fair

- The Mississippi State Fairgrounds hosted the 161st annual Mississippi State Fair in October 2020 with 360,000 in attendance. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and extreme weather conditions, the attendance was lower than in past years. Mississippi was one of the very few states to host an annual state fair in 2020.
- Fairgoers enjoyed timeless traditions of livestock shows, the petting zoo, pig races, and all the fan-favorite foods. A new attraction, Timberworks Lumberjack Show and several new rides were added.
- As a result of the inclement weather, the Mississippi State Fair extended its 12-day fair into a 17-day fair to give fairgoers an additional opportunity to enjoy the Fair.
- The safety of fairgoers was a top priority. Precautionary measures were put into place including placing hand sanitizer stations throughout the midway, providing masks at the gates, and complying with the State's executive orders at the time.

### Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo

- The Fairgrounds hosted the 56th annual Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo in February 2021 with 20,000 attending the rodeo.
- Due to the inclement and icy road conditions, the rodeo performance schedule was modified to accommodate for two postponements.
- New attractions for the Dixie National included the Dixie National Trade Show and Dixie National Steakhouse, which were held in the new Mississippi Trade Mart.
- Precautionary measures were put into place including sanitizing the Coliseum following the rodeo performances, providing masks, and complying with all the State's executive orders. Seating for the rodeo was spread out for recommended social distancing.

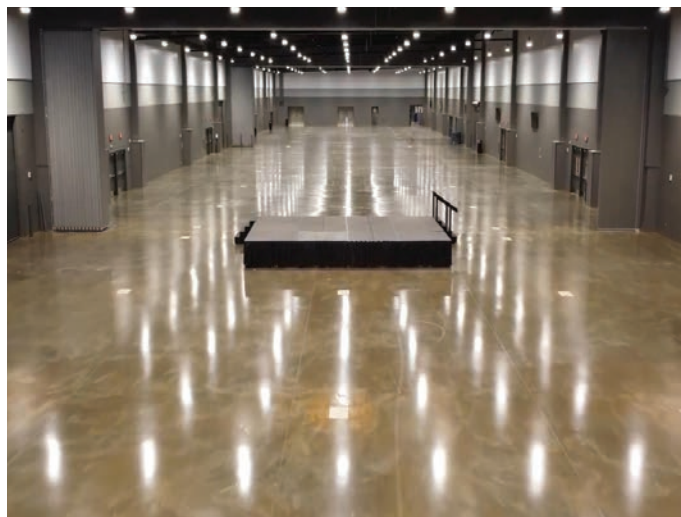
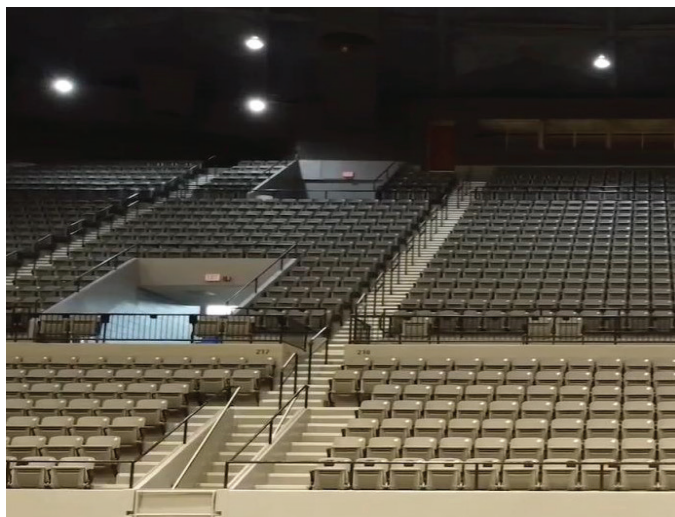
### Mississippi Mudbug Festival

- The Fairgrounds hosted the inaugural Mississippi Mudbug Festival in April 2021. This five-day outdoor event included a large crawfish boil, musical performances and over 20 carnival rides. North American Midway Entertainment provided carnival rides to elevate the experience for the whole family.
- This event was a great success with over 60,000 people in attendance.



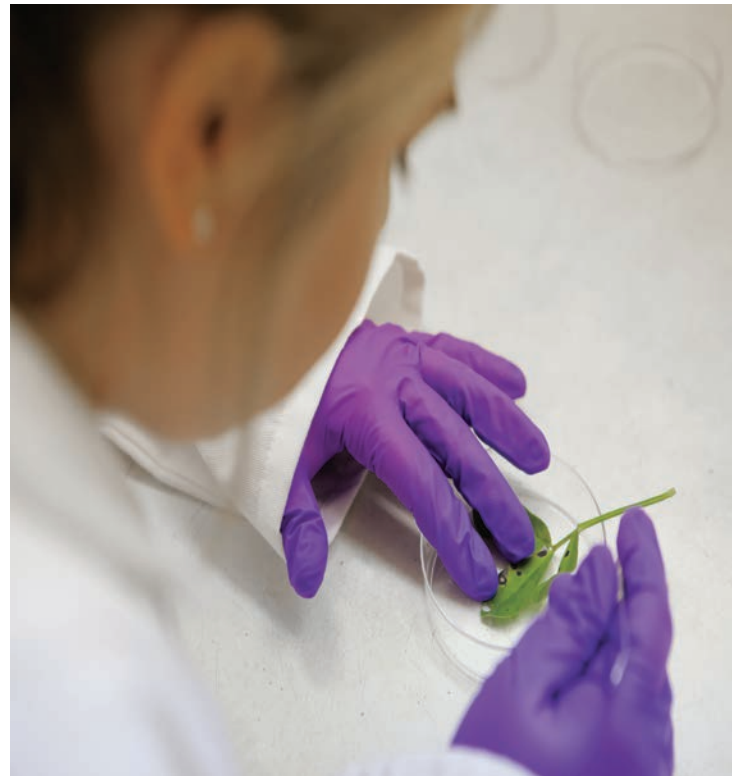
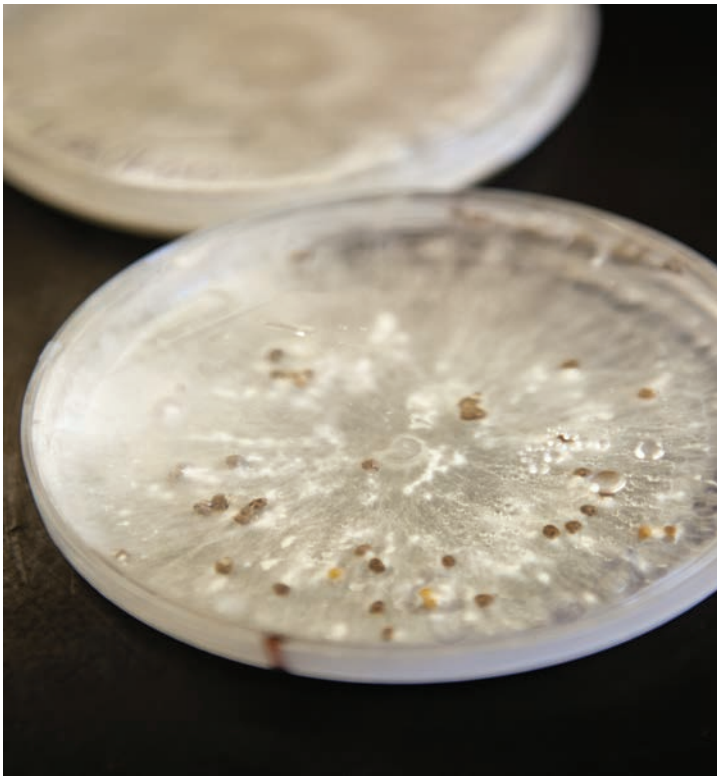
## NEW PROJECTS

- The Mississippi State Fairgrounds completed the construction of the new Mississippi Trade Mart in October 2020.
- The new Mississippi Trade Mart is 110,000 square feet, and includes a lobby, a 2,500 square foot commercial kitchen, two cafes, a reception area, a “front porch” area and three massive trade halls. The trade halls can be configured to provide a seamless connection to the Coliseum’s arena floor, allowing for larger trade shows and events than ever before. The “front porch” area provides a large, covered space for exterior events and opens onto a new plaza that is shared with the Coliseum. This was a \$30 million project.
- The old Trade Mart was demolished, and a parking lot was created in the space.
- A \$2.3 million renovation was complete in the Coliseum. The renovation included repairing and painting the floors and walls, installing 6,500 new seats with cupholders, and adding handrails and reflectors. The floors were equipped with an abrasive, slip-resistant paint to prevent falls and reflectors were specifically placed for the lighting of walkways.
- Following the ice storm in February 2021 and the Jackson water crisis, the Fairgrounds started the project of drilling a water well on the property to be able to provide a reliable, clean water source. It is to be completed in fiscal year 2022.
- The Fairgrounds started a \$1.4 million renovation project in the Kirk Fordice Equine Center, which is to be completed in fiscal year 2022.
- A branding strategy, which includes a new logo for the Fairgrounds, was developed and implemented.



*The Coliseum was renovated to coincide with the construction of the brand new 110,000 square foot Trade Mart.*

**DIRECTOR**  
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# BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY PROTECTING AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL INTERESTS

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*The Bureau of Plant Industry protects the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from harmful insects, diseases, and weeds.*

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) is a regulatory and service division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. BPI serves as the Plant Protection and Quarantine Division of the agency. BPI administers 31 programs pertaining to agricultural aviation, pesticides, plant pests, honey bees, seed, animal feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil/plant amendments. Additionally, the Bureau maintains cooperative agreements with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in administration and enforcement of state and federal laws. BPI is also designated by the federal government as the state agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).



## PLANT PEST PROGRAM

Under the provisions of the Mississippi Plant Act, the Bureau carries out plant pest programs designed to prevent the spread of destructive insects, diseases, and other pests when plant material, machinery, and carriers are transported. These programs include inspection, certification, quarantine, and survey activities.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Certified 944 nurseries and nursery dealers.
- Conducted 1,199 nursery and nursery dealer inspections.
- Issued 493 phytosanitary certificates for plant material and seed export.
- Conducted 1,199 visual surveys statewide at nurseries and nursery dealers for Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Chrysanthemum White Rust, Viburnum Leaf Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, Giant African Snail, Cactus Moth, and Asian Longhorned Beetle. Survey results at all sites were negative.
- Conducted 90 visual surveys at 30 soybean production fields in 21 counties for Maritime Garden Snail, Bud Borer, Cucurbit Beetle, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Yellow Witchweed, and Benghal Dayflower. Survey results at all sites were negative.
- Conducted 28 visual surveys at eight different production corn fields for Cucurbit Beetle, Late Wilt or Corn, Black Maize Beetle, Java Downy Mildew, Philippine Downy Mildew, and Brown Stripe Downy Mildew.
- Conducted 40 visual surveys at 63 cotton production fields in 5 counties for Giant African Snail, Cotton Seed Bug, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, and Benghal Dayflower. Survey results at all sites were negative.
- Conducted 20 visual surveys at 20 rice production fields in five counties for Giant African Snail, Apple Snails, South American Leaf Miner, Bakanae, Senegal Tea Plant, Bacterial Leaf Streak of Rice, and Bacterial Blight of Rice. Survey results at all sites were negative.
- Conducted 1,199 visual surveys statewide in nurseries, nursery dealers, and the environment for the noxious weed Cogongrass. Survey results at all sites were negative.
- Traps were set in 20 locations for Exotic Bark Beetle. These sites were located within Lowndes, Oktibbeha, and Clay Counties. In total, 1,973 traps were set and screened for exotic species. All samples screened were negative for all reportable exotic species.
- Placed six traps at lumber mills and furniture manufacturers in six counties for the Sirex Woodwasp. Results from all traps were negative.





## PESTICIDE PROGRAM

Under the provisions of the Mississippi Pesticide Law, the Bureau of Plant Industry carries out various activities to register and inspect pesticide products, administers special types of pesticide registrations and exemptions, license dealers of restricted-use pesticides, and conducts activities protecting the general public and the environment from possible pesticide contamination and misuse.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Registered 15,500 pesticide products.
- Started updating the online pesticide registration system to ensure efficient pesticide registration.
- Collected 378 samples from products available at retail and distribution outlets to check compliance with state and federal pesticide laws.
- Issued 140 stop-sale orders on pesticide products found to be deficient, misbranded, and non-registered.
- Issued one special-use registration (Section 24c of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Issued one emergency exemption (Section 18 of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Licensed 309 dealers to sell restricted use pesticide products.
- Issued 906 licenses/permits and 1,271 registered technician identification cards to persons engaged in professional services such as pest control and weed control services.
- Licensed 206 agricultural aviation pilots and 89 applicators, and registered 167 aircraft for agricultural purposes.
- Issued 177 pest management consultants licenses.
- Issued 1,697 private applicator certificates.
- Issued 510 commercial applicator certificates.
- Conducted 25 producer-establishment inspections, 603 marketplace inspections, 628 inspections of applicator records, 185 inspections of dealer records, and 13 container containment inspections.
- Conducted 19 nonagricultural/for cause inspections of pesticide misuse and 71 agricultural/for cause inspections of pesticide misuse.
- Conducted 1,616 nonagricultural inspections of pesticide use and 49 agricultural inspections of pesticide use.
- Collected 144 samples under the Pesticide Enforcement Program.
- Conducted 27 worker protection inspections.
- Collected 24,820 pounds of waste pesticide products for disposal.
- Issued 22 Horticulturists licenses.
- Issued 28 Tree Surgeons licenses.
- MDAC's Waste Disposal Program has played an important role in environmental protection by offering farmers and landowners a safe way to dispose of pesticides to help reduce risks associated with pesticide waste disposal.
- MDAC continues to support the Mississippi State Extension Termite University to conduct training and recertification.
- Fully implemented the AgNet system for all inspection activities at BPI.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- BPI has continued its efforts implementing the Mississippi Honeybee Stewardship Program. The program promotes awareness, communication, and education between beekeepers and farmers. This program was developed through a joint effort between the Mississippi Farm Bureau, Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Mississippi Beekeepers Association, Mississippi Agricultural Aviation Association, Mississippi State University Extension Service, Mississippi Agricultural Consultants Association, Mississippi Agricultural Industry Council, and row crop farmers.



## SEED PROGRAM AND STATE SEED LABORATORY

The Seed Testing Laboratory provides regulatory and service seed testing to the seed industry and farmers of Mississippi. The seed lab inspects and collects samples of seed offered for sale to determine truth-in-labeling. Seed companies and farmers may submit samples of seed for testing to obtain quality and purity levels of seed. Regulatory and service tests protect and support seed companies and farmers by providing unbiased and reliable information in a timely manner. The Seed Testing Laboratory also tests all seed for the Mississippi Certified Seed Program.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Issued 1,910 permits for the sale of seed to be planted.
- Received 17,579 seed samples and performed a total of 31,492 tests on seed.
- Collected 3,130 official regulatory seed samples and found 73 official regulatory seed samples to be in violation of the State Seed Law.
- Conducted 9,799 special tests on seed such as cool germ test, accelerated aging, and chemical tests.
- MDAC and Mississippi State University Extension are working to develop Seed Technology Short Course.
- Provided education and outreach through laboratory tours.



## FEED, FERTILIZER, LIME, AND SOIL AMENDMENTS PROGRAM

Under provisions of Mississippi laws regulating feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil amendment products, the Bureau of Plant Industry carries out activities that include registering products and facilities, collecting registration and inspection fees, inspecting and sampling products for label guarantees, and assessing penalties for substandard products.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Registered 18,659 feed products from 1,163 feed distributors.
- Collected 1,797 feed samples.
- Registered 25,688 fertilizer products from 775 fertilizer distributors.
- Collected 622 fertilizer samples.
- Registered 167 lime products from 84 distributors.
- Collected 68 lime samples.



## PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

The BPI public information program provided updates and training material for the following groups and/or events: Fall Flower and Garden Fest in Crystal Springs, Mississippi Agricultural Aviation Association Convention in Biloxi, Pesticide Recertification Trainings at the Panola County Extension Office, Coastal Research and Extension Center, Forrest County Extension Office, Central MS Research and Extension Center, Delta Research and Extension Center, and North MS Research and Extension Center.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Bureau stayed committed to delivering state services to Mississippi's agricultural and horticultural interests while monitoring the COVID-19 situation. In late July 2020, packets of seeds began appearing in the mail nationwide that Mississippians had not ordered. Inspectors from the Bureau of Plant Industry collected these seed packets from state residents and MSU Extension Service County offices. Due to USDA guidelines, local USDA offices were unable to assist with the collection of seed.

**DIRECTOR**

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**CONSUMER PROTECTION \* FEDERAL & STATE INSPECTION \* PETROLEUM  
INSPECTION \* MEAT INSPECTION \* WEIGHTS & MEASURES \* GRAINS**

# REGULATORY SERVICES PROTECTING MISSISSIPPI

The Bureau of Regulatory Services is a regulatory bureau within the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. Its mission is to effectively and efficiently administer and enforce the laws and regulations charged to the Bureau. The foremost goals of the Bureau are to protect the health and economic welfare of all citizens, to afford a measure of economic protection which citizens cannot provide for themselves, and to strive for equity in the marketplace which, when realized, works to the good of all citizens of this state.

The Bureau is divided into area-specific divisions that regulate certain businesses within the state. The Bureau administers state laws and promulgates regulations to support those laws in the areas of Meat Inspection, Retail Food Sanitation, Labeling laws, Grains, Aquaculture, Peanuts, Petroleum, and Weights and Measures. The Bureau partners with multiple federal and state agencies to carry out its mission.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce launched a new promotional partnership with Alcorn State University. The partnership is part of a new initiative to promote universities within the state through MDAC's Bureau of Regulatory Services inspection stickers. Each division within the Bureau of Regulatory Services features the school colors of the chosen university for one year. This authorized system in the regulation of various segments of commerce informs the public when inspections were conducted as well as the contact information for MDAC's Weights and Measures Division, State Metrology Laboratory, Petroleum Products Inspection Division and Consumer Protection Division.



# REGULATORY SERVICES CONTINUED

## MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & COMMERCE

### Bureau of Regulatory Services 2021 Inspection Stickers



Each division within the Bureau of Regulatory Services features the purple and gold school colors of Alcorn State University for one year.



Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced the promotional partnership between the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce and Alcorn State University at a press conference in February 2021. Picture left to right: Dr. Franklin Chukwuma, Associate Director for Extension; Marcus Ward, Vice President for Institutional Advancement; Dr. Felecia M. Nave, President of Alcorn State University; Commissioner Andy Gipson; Henri Fuselier, Jr., Director of MDAC's Consumer Protection Division; Brent Bowman, Director of MDAC's Weights and Measures Division; and Jennifer Thompson, Director of MDAC's Petroleum Division.

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**DEPUTY DIRECTOR**  
**GENE ROBERTSON**  
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# CONSUMER PROTECTION

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## FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY

*The Consumer Protection Division protects the interests of the general public by ensuring food quality and safety and fairness in addition to equity in the retail marketplace.*

The Consumer Protection Division continues to be one of the most diversified divisions within the Department. The Division's goal is to protect Mississippi consumers on a daily basis by enforcing retail food safety and sanitation laws and regulations, weights and measures standards, and food labeling requirements in retail food establishments such as convenience stores and grocery stores. The Division conducts routine inspections of all retail food establishments throughout the state to ensure that food safety and sanitation regulations are being met. The Division's inspectors routinely examine meat market sanitation, ensure food is stored at appropriate temperatures, confirm the availability of hot water and soap in restrooms, and monitor stores to ensure the absence of insects and rodents.

The Consumer Protection Division Inspectors examine scales in all retail food establishments to confirm that weights and measures standards for purchased items are being met. They also ensure consumers receive the quantity and quality of the goods they pay for by testing scales and UPC pricing for accuracy to make sure the consumer is not being overcharged or undersold when purchasing a product.

Consumer Protection weights and measures inspections include the following:

- Ensuring the accuracy of scales, including meat scales, deli scales, produce scales, and checkout scales.
- UPC price verification sample testing, which ensures that prices on shelves match prices at checkout registers.
- Net weight package checking inspections, which ensure not only that consumers are paying for only the net weight of foods, but also that the correct weight is properly applied to the price of the product.

The Consumer Protection Division also enforces proper food labeling requirements through cooperative agreements and collaboration with government entities.

# CONSUMER PROTECTION CONTINUED

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The Consumer Protection Division works with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service to perform inspections of retail food establishments to ensure that illegally processed meats are not sold in retail food establishments.

The Consumer Protection Division conducts Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) inspections through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Foods such as muscle cuts of meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, and unprocessed nuts must have country-of-origin declarations at the final point of sale.

The Consumer Protection Division's food labeling responsibilities also include inspection of the sale of pure honey and pure syrup. The Division works in collaboration with the Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi State Chemical Lab to regulate the sale of honey and syrup. Pure honey and pure syrup label inspections are performed to ensure consumers are receiving the product as it is advertised on the labels.

These cooperative efforts are performed routinely so that consumers are educated and aware of the quality and origin of the foods they purchase.

## **CATFISH, SHRIMP, AND CRAWFISH**

It is essential to ensure catfish, shrimp, and crawfish being promoted as U.S. products are not being discreetly replaced with foreign substitutes. The Consumer Protection Division makes inspections in restaurants throughout the state, making sure to prohibit retailers from selling similar foods disguised or labeled incorrectly as U.S. products.

## **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE**

The Consumer Protection Division has maintained a natural disaster partnership with the FDA and other state agencies in the event of natural disasters, such as hurricanes and tornadoes. In an effort to help emergency responders, the Division has mapped the GPS coordinates of all of its inspected stores.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Issued 1,947 retail food establishment licenses.
- Issued 58 retail egg licenses.
- Issued 31 Mobile Vendor licenses.
- Conducted 4,405 total inspections of businesses which included 6,819 retail scale inspections; 3,228 retail food sanitation inspections; 34,176 items for net weight; 3,228 disposition of garbage inspections; and 969 UPC price verification inspections.
- Inspected 68,411 dozen of shell eggs.
- Conducted 462 Catfish/Shrimp/Crawfish Marketing inspections.
- Conducted 26 USDA COOL audits.

### DIRECTOR

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# FEDERAL & STATE INSPECTION PROGRAM

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## FOOD SAFETY

*The Federal/State Inspection Program Division provides quality inspections for produce growers as well as unbiased food safety audits.*

This Division conducts fruit and vegetable inspections as well as third party food safety audits known as Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) audits. All inspections and food safety audits are provided statewide to farms, packers, and wholesalers.

The GAP/GHP audits are voluntary independent audits of produce suppliers throughout the production and supply chain. GAP/GHP audits focus on best agricultural practices to verify that fruits and vegetables are produced, packed, handled, and stored in the safest manner possible to minimize risks of microbial food safety hazards. The audits verify adherence to the recommendations made in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* and industry recognized food safety practices.

Farmer Stock Peanuts must be inspected and a grade issued per lot in order for the farmer to receive payment at the point of sale. The Federal/State Inspection Program Division grades the peanuts brought to buying points in the state.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Conducted 77 USDA GAP/GHP food safety audits.
- Graded 25,751 tons of peanuts at three buying points in the state.

# FEDERAL & STATE

## INSPECTION PROGRAM CONTINUED

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### PRODUCE SAFETY DIVISION

*The Produce Safety Division provides food safety assurance for consumers of fresh fruit and vegetables which are grown in the State of Mississippi.*

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce’s Produce Safety Division implements the Produce Safety Rule in Mississippi. It also provides Outreach and On Farm Readiness Reviews to farmers prior to an operation having an inspection. The outreach team works to increase awareness of the Produce Safety Rule as well as help growers prepare their operations for compliance. All outreach services, with the exception of our required training, are free to growers in Mississippi.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Identified 23 new farms which grow and sell produce covered under the rule.
- Performed 31 inspections at identified farms.
- Provided 15 On Farm Readiness Reviews to identified large farms.
- Performed 75 educational farm visits to growers.
- Provided growers with five Produce Safety Alliance Grower trainings in conjunction with MSU and Alcorn State University training 62 growers.
- Developed Produce Safety Division publications for grower education.
- Mailed over 200 Produce Safety Educational packets to possible growers.
- Promoted the Produce Safety rule at over seven meetings and workshops statewide.
- Awarded with five year FDA CAP-Grant.

**DIRECTOR**  
**KEVIN RIGGIN**  
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# PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

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## ENSURING COMPLIANCE

*The Petroleum Products Inspection Division regulates the motor fuel sold in Mississippi to ensure that those who purchase petroleum products and motor fuels get what they pay for in terms of quality and quantity.*

All petroleum products sold in the state must be registered with MDAC's Petroleum Products Inspection Division. All retail motor fuel products which include gasoline, ethanol blended fuel, diesel fuel, biodiesel blended fuel, and kerosene, are analyzed by the Mississippi State Chemical Lab to ensure product compliance within American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) specifications. Analysis includes tests for octane number, alcohol content, diesel flash point, biodiesel content, and the presence of water in fuel.

The Division regulates approximately 2.3 billion gallons of fuel consumed by Mississippians and visitors to the state and conducts annual inspections of the Retail Motor-Fuel Dispensers (RMFD), commonly known as gas pumps, to ensure compliance with all laws and regulations. These inspections consist of ensuring the accuracy of RMFDs, testing for the presence of water, checking signage to ensure that the proper price is displayed on all signs, and checking the quality of the fuel to ensure proper product designations. Violations are issued for equipment found to be out of compliance with the petroleum law. Petroleum equipment repairmen are required to obtain a license from MDAC and report all adjusted devices to the Division.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Continued efforts of maintaining efficiency by eliminating printed inspection reports by 99 percent. Reports are sent electronically to respective responsible parties with a valid email address.
- Registered 223 fuel distributors and licensed 498 petroleum equipment repairmen.
- Conducted annual inspections of 56,314 registered devices at 2,663 retail establishments and obtained 1,919 fuel samples.
- Tested a total of 45,372 individual devices.
- Responded to 165 consumer complaints within 24 hours, which resulted in corrective action being taken in over 28 percent of the complaints for non compliance.
- Enforced stop sales for 146 fuel quality violations, 194 calibration violations, 299 sign violations, and 145 water violations.
- Continued contactless COVID-19 inspection protocol.



# PETROLEUM PRODUCTS CONTINUED

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*The Petroleum Products Inspection Division regulates approximately 2.3 billion gallons of fuel consumed by Mississippians and visitors to our state.*

**DIRECTOR**  
**MICHAEL BLACKWELL**  
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# MEAT INSPECTION



## FOOD SAFETY

*The Meat Inspection Division provides food safety assurance to consumers of meat and poultry food products.*

The Meat Inspection Division provides inspection services to establishments that prepare meat and poultry food products for entry into intrastate commerce and to some establishments that engage in interstate commerce. The Division inspects all establishments engaged in the slaughtering of food animals and poultry, except for those plants operating under federal inspection. The Division also inspects the further processing of meat, meat-food products, poultry, and poultry food products and their preparation for consumer items. These products are also inspected throughout formulation, packaging, labeling, and distribution to retail outlets. This assurance is becoming more critical as more food products are intended to be consumed with little or no further preparation at home.

MDAC has a cooperative agreement with the USDA establishing a meat and poultry inspection system that is equal to the federal inspection system. In addition, MDAC has cooperative agreements for the Talmadge-Aiken Program (TA), which permits state employees to provide inspections at federal meat plants, as well as the Compliance and Investigation Division Program (CID), which gives authority to inspect businesses that handle meat and poultry for law compliance.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Inspected 34.14 million pounds of red meat and 45.47 million pounds of poultry.
- Inspected 9,872 rabbits and 9,243 quail.
- Issued licenses to 30 state meat plants.
- Inspected 25 plants through the Talmadge-Aiken program.
- Issued licenses to 9 Rendering Companies for their rendering trucks and trailers.



*The Meat Inspection Division provides food safety assurance to consumers in Mississippi. In 2021, the Division inspected 34.14 million pounds of red meat and 45.47 million pounds of poultry.*

### DIRECTOR

HOPE MARTIN, D.V.M.

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# WEIGHTS & MEASURES

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## ENSURING ACCURACY

*The Weights and Measures Division regulates the use of weighing and measuring devices used in commerce to ensure consumers are treated fairly in the marketplace.*

The Weights and Measures Division inspects and tests scales and measurement equipment used in commerce to ensure compliance with state laws and equity in the marketplace.

Division inspectors make routine inspections on all types of commercial weighing devices including railroad scales, vehicle scales, livestock scales, hopper scales, floor scales, bench scales, and those used to weigh precious metals and stones like gold, silver, and diamonds. Inspectors conduct package inspections to verify the net contents of packaged commodities and price verification inspections in businesses that utilize UPC scanning systems. The Division also investigates complaints involving weighing and measuring devices.

The Division also licenses livestock facilities, livestock auctioneers, pulpwood facilities, bonded weighmasters, scale service companies, and repairmen that install and repair weighing or measuring devices within the State of Mississippi.



## MOISTURE METER TESTING LABORATORY

The Mississippi Moisture Meter Laboratory provides testing and inspection of devices used to measure the moisture content of agricultural products offered for sale, processed, or stored, using standard methods set by the USDA. The Moisture Meter Laboratory also compiles grain standards used in the inspection of grain moisture meters tested in the state. The laboratory is located on the campus of the Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville.



# WEIGHTS & MEASURES CONTINUED



***The Weights and Measures Division makes routine inspections on all types of commercial weighing devices including railroad scales, vehicle scales, livestock scales, hopper scales, floor scales, bench scales, and those used to weigh precious metals and stones like gold, silver, and diamonds.***

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Tested 4,612 active scales.
- Inspected 816 heavy capacity scales and 4,702 intermediate scales.
- Inspected 58 railway scales.
- Inspected 86 livestock scales.
- Calibrated 33 dairy farm milk tanks.
- Conducted 81 weighmaster Inspections.
- Conducted 32 pulpwood/timber Inspections.
- Conducted 184 package weighing inspections.
- Conducted 69 UPC inspections.
- Conducted 112 oven tests – (Corn 30, Rice 32, Wheat 32, Soybeans 18.)
- Conducted 292 moisture meter tests.

**DIRECTOR**  
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## METROLOGY LABORATORY

*The Mississippi Metrology Laboratory tests, calibrates, and certifies measuring devices used in commerce for accuracy.*

The Mississippi Metrology Laboratory tests, calibrates, and certifies weighing and measuring artifacts used to test commercial devices for accuracy by industry and state regulatory officials.

The Regulatory Services Bureau maintains the Mississippi Metrology Laboratory located in Lorman on the campus of Alcorn State University. The lab is accredited for the testing of mass and volume by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). The accreditation allows the Lab to provide certification and calibration services for government, commercial businesses, and private entities. This certification allows registered service agents and MDAC to test all weighing and measuring devices for accuracy used in commerce.



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# GRAIN DEALERS AND WAREHOUSES

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*MDAC's Bureau of Regulatory Services licenses grain dealers and grain warehouses in the State of Mississippi.*

Mississippi law requires that grain dealers and grain warehouses be licensed by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, unless they hold a license from the federal government.

The Mississippi Grain Dealers Law requires that dealers who purchase grain directly from producers must be licensed and bonded. Operations or individuals who are not licensed are prohibited by law from purchasing grain from producers.

Warehouses that store grain for the public in Mississippi are required to be licensed pursuant to the Grain Warehouse Law, unless the warehouse is licensed under the United States Warehouse Act. Grain warehousemen must be bonded for financial and storage obligations and they must maintain sufficient assets to cover potential losses. Bonding requirements of the law range from a minimum of \$15,000 to, in general, a maximum of \$1,000,000.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Grain Dealers and Warehouses Division licensed 41 grain dealers and 14 grain warehouses.

**DIRECTOR**  
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# INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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*The Information Management Division provides information technology services to MDAC staff.*

The Information Management Division (IMD) provides information technology and services to all employees of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, as well as provides technical and network support, application development and systems support, and strategic planning services for both MDAC and the Mississippi Board of Animal Health.

IMD plays a critical role in aligning information technology with the agency's business goals, providing the infrastructure resources to support the agency's communication and decision making, and exploring emerging technologies to promote agriculture and commerce in the state.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided general IT support, resolving 1,345 tracked agency Help Desk tickets.
- Switched MDAC mobile app platforms and updated mobile apps including MS State Fair and Dixie National Rodeo allowing for near instant response to publication, updates, and communications.
- Assisted with implementation of the Mississippi Agriculture CARES Act Management System to process Mississippi Agriculture Stabilization Act (MASA) claims, allowing producers to submit applications, requests for funding, and upload required documents.
- Maintained digital media presence including MDAC website, Ag Museum, Fairgrounds, Dixie National Rodeo, Bureau of Animal Health, Genuine MS®, and Marketplace Portal.
- Launched all new Mississippi Magnolia Gardens website.
- Provided LAANC/FAA training for Drone Operators.
- Created AgNet On-Farm Readiness Review (OFRR) request system for Produce Safety farms to request farm reviews on MDAC website.
- Created FFLSP database connectivity for BPI to be able to run reports directly against the database.
- Launched BPI Automation system for inspections and compliance including management of licensing / certifications and program area databases – Apiaries, Nurseries, Feed/Fertilizer/Lime, Seed, Pesticide, and Sweet Potato.
- Assisted Market Development with creation of Genuine MS® Store to enable credit card transactions for first ever pop-up store at the MS State Fair.
- Conducted inspections in new web based BPI Automation inspection system in the field.
- Created AgNet Nuisance Animal – Wild Hog Control Program – application for farmers to apply for traps and MDAC employees to manage traps.
- Completed conversion of phones to VOIP for 3rd floor and 2nd floor offices.

# INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CONTINUED

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- Created disaster recovery site at the MS ITS data center on Eastwood Dr.
- Updated the Mississippi sweet potato map illustrating quarantined acres per county.
- Created AgNet Meat Establishments Portal for management of businesses providing processing services including a public map view of locations of establishments.
- Created AgNet Employment Opportunities portal for Human Resources to post agency job announcements on web site.
- Partnered with ITS to provide Zoom conferencing for agency employees.
- Created AgNet portal for adding public notices to agency web site.
- Implemented modern networking infrastructure in new Mississippi Trade Mart.
- Launched AgNet Museum Contract database to allow Museum staff to manage facility contracts.
- Provided multimedia services and aerial documentation by collecting footage of many events and activities.
- Initiated AgNet Fairgrounds Contract database system build.
- Initiated Pesticide Registration System rebuild.
- Provided GIS mapping for Produce Safety Farm locations.
- Created AgNet Genuine Mississippi digital product catalog.
- Implemented Office 365 Audio Conferencing system to allow traditional phone lines for Teams meetings.
- Created Farmers Market invoicing system in AgNet.
- Added ability to take credit cards on Dixie National Openshow registration system.
- Continuation of support of teleworking during COVID by providing laptops, tablets, software and training.
- Provided Samsung Tablets and training for BPI inspectors to perform inspections in new web based BPI Automation inspection system in the field.

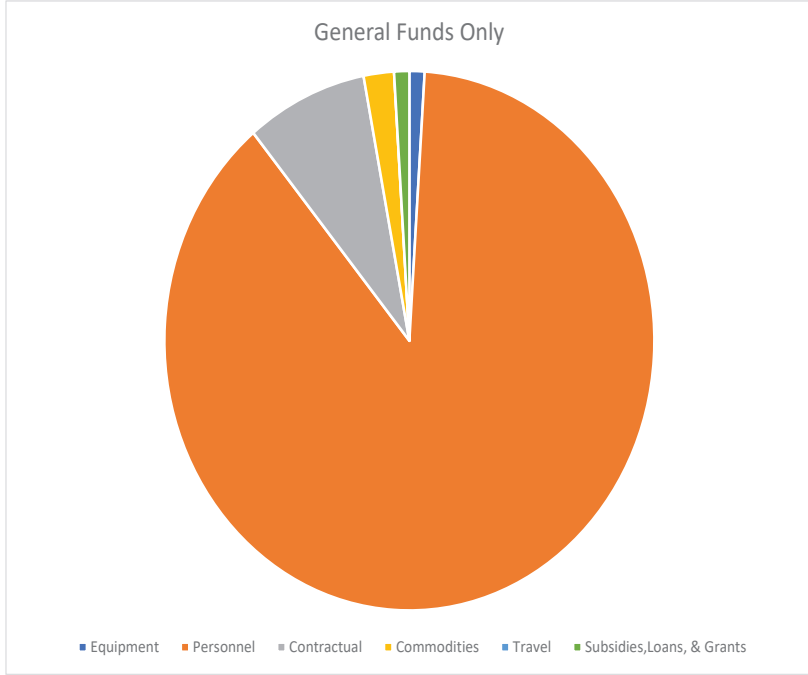
## DIRECTOR

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# REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

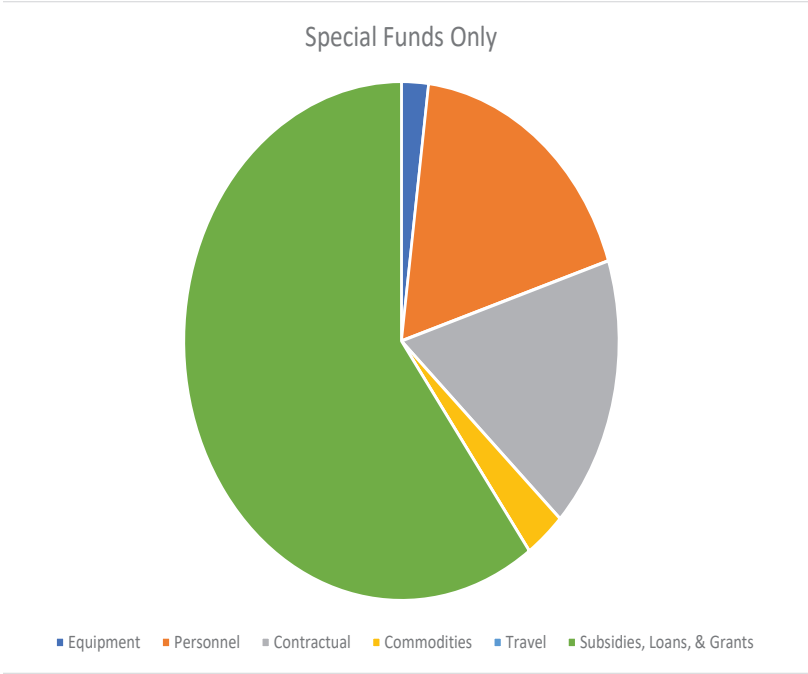
## GENERAL FUNDS ONLY



Total Revenues: \$7,204,629  
Total Expenditures: \$7,204,629  
Percentage Breakdown:

- Equipment: 1%
- Personnel: 88%
- Contractual: 8%
- Commodities: 2%
- Travel: <1%
- Subsidies, Loans, & Grants: 1%

## SPECIAL FUNDS ONLY



Total Revenues: \$26,485,809  
Total Expenditures: \$24,184,641  
Percentage Breakdown:

- Equipment: 2%
- Personnel: 18%
- Contractual: 17%
- Commodities: 3%
- Travel: <1%
- Subsidies, Loans, & Grants: 60%

# REVENUES & EXPENDITURES CONTINUED

## GENERAL & SPECIAL FUNDS

Total Revenues: \$33,690,438  
Total Expenditures: \$31,389,270  
Percentage Breakdown:

- Equipment: 2%
- Personnel: 34%
- Contractual: 15%
- Commodities: 3%
- Travel: <1%
- Subsidies, Loans, & Grants: 46%

General and Special Funds

